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MAY MEETING.

The Society held its stated monthly meeting this day, Thursday, May 14, at eleven o'clock, A.M.; the President, Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, in the chair.

In the absence of the Librarian, the Recording Secretary announced donations to the library from the American Antislavery Society; the City of Boston; the British Charitable Society; the Chicago Historical Society; the Essex Institute; the Trustees of Dartmouth College; the Trustees of the Peabody Institute, South Danvers; Rev. Caleb D. Bradlee; George E. Chambers, Esq.; Count Adolphe de Circourt; Mr. Thomas Y. Crowell; George T. Curtis, Esq.; Mr. John F. Eliot; Hon. Millard Fillmore; Hon. R. H. Gardiner; Reuben A. Guild, Esq.; Benjamin H. Hall, Esq.; Mrs. J. H. Hanaford; Clement H. Hill, Esq.; Frederic Kidder, Esq.; L. A. H. Latour, Esq.; Professor Francis Lieber; Rev. Abner Morse; Joel Munsell, Esq.; Henry Onderdonk, jun., Esq.; Mr. Stephen Randal; John Gilmary Shea, Esq.; Mr. Oliver Spurr; Mr. F. M. Stone; Mr. S. Urbino; William Winthrop, Esq., United-States Consul at Malta; and from Messrs. Bartlet, Brooks (C.), Deane, Folsom, Minot, Norton, Robbins (C.), Sturgis, Webb, and Winthrop, of the Society.

The following donations to the cabinet, received during the last month, were announced:—

A *fac-simile* of the Warrant for beheading Charles I.; and a Photograph of St. Botolph's Church, Boston, Eng. (both framed). From William G. Brooks, Esq.

A Mezzotinto Portrait of Sir Jeffery Amherst (framed);* and two Specimens of Peruvian Pottery, brought from South America by Commodore John Percival, United-States Navy. From Hon. Robert C. Winthrop.

An Engraved Portrait of Hon. Increase Sumner. From Charles Deane, Esq.

A Ball extracted from the thigh of John Kelly, Company K, Ninth New-York State Militia, wounded at the battle of Fredericksburg, December, 1862. From Mr. M. E. Chandler.

The President, referring to the portrait of Sir Jeffery Amherst, presented to-day, read the following original letter, now in the possession of our associate, Mr. Deane : —

CAMP OF TICONDEROGA August 1st 1759

SIR, — I am very glad the big boat is returned, as every thing it brings will be of great use. pray be so good to forward the brewing Apparatus as fast as possible. The Army is beginning to grow sickly, & I believe from no other reason but drinking water wherever they find it, which Sickness will, I hope, be got the better of by Spruce beer. The Shoes will be of great use to us. I shall order the Regts to send for them directly, and to apply to Mr Kilby's Commissary for the issuing of them, you will therefore order Mr Kilby's man to deliver them according to the List I shall send him. Is there any appearance of more live Cattle coming ?

I am your most Humble Servant

JEFF. AMHERST.

Col. BRADSTREET.

* On the portrait is the following engraved title : —

“ SIR JEFFERY AMHERST, K.B.,

“ Commander-in-chief of the British forces in America from 1758 to 1764; created Baron Amherst of Holmesdale, in Kent, 1776; Governor of Guernsey; Colonel of the Second Regiment of Life Guards, and Colonel-in-chief of the Sixtieth or Royal American Regiment; one of his Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council; General commanding in chief the British troops in England from 1778 to 1782; and again from January, 1793, to February, 1795. Painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A. Engraved by James Watson. Published by J. and J. Boydell, Cheapside; and at the Shakspeare Gallery, Pall Mall, London.”

In the absence of the Corresponding Secretary, the Recording Secretary read letters of acceptance from Hon. Millard Fillmore of Buffalo, N.Y., and from Rev. William G. Eliot, D.D., of St. Louis, Mo.

The President stated, that he had received the sum of one thousand dollars from Hon. William Minot, and William Minot, jun., — a gift to the Society from the estate of the late Miss Mary P. Townsend, of which they are the executors, — in addition to the sum of two thousand dollars heretofore presented by them from the same source.

Voted, That the thanks of the Society be presented to Hon. William Minot, and William Minot, jun., executors of the will of Miss Mary P. Townsend, for this valuable contribution from the estate of that excellent lady, and this renewed token of their interest in this Society.

Voted, That the subject of the appropriation of this sum be referred to the Standing Committee.

Mr. NORTON presented a collection of manuscript papers, relating to privateering, from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITNEY, from the Committee on collecting Documents relating to the Civil War, presented a large and valuable collection of French publications.

Voted, That the thanks of the Society be presented to Mr. Whitney for this acceptable donation.

The Treasurer stated, that, in obedience to the instructions of the Society, he had executed the Declaration of Trust, constituting the investment of the Appleton Fund ; and that he had caused the same to be recorded in the Registry of Deeds.

George Grote, Esq., B.C.L., of England, was elected an Honorary Member, and Professor James Russell Lowell, of Cambridge, a Resident Member, of the Society.

Voted, That the thanks of the Society be presented to William Winthrop, Esq., consul at Malta, for his valuable donation to the library.

Dr. JENKS communicated a paper upon the present Chinese Dynasty, of the Ta-tshing Family of Mantchoo origin.

Mr. PARSONS presented a specimen of the old paper currency of 1778, of North Carolina, of the denomination of five dollars, brought from Newbern, N.C., by Mr. Horace P. Tuttle of the Forty-fourth Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Militia.

Dr. PEABODY read the following Memoir of our late esteemed associate, Rev. Charles Mason, D.D.:—

M E M O I R

OF

REV. CHARLES MASON, D.D.

BY REV. A. P. PEABODY, D.D.

CHARLES MASON was a descendant, in the fifth generation, of John Mason, the hero and historian of the Pequot War, who was born in England in 1599; was one of the first settlers of Dorchester, Conn.; was for many years Major-General of the forces of Connecticut, and for ten years Deputy-Governor; and died at Norwich in 1672. Jeremiah Mason, the grandson of John, was also distinguished in the military service of his country; having held an important command on Dorchester Heights in the early part of the war of the Revolution. His son Jeremiah, the father of the subject of this sketch,—born in Lebanon, Conn., in 1768, and a graduate of Yale College,—was well known as long the leader of the New-Hampshire Bar, as in his latter years holding a similar professional rank in Boston, and as equally versed in the science of law and the art of advocacy,—equally eminent for his skill and tact in the management of jury-trials, and for his capacity of sound and weighty argument on questions exclusively legal. He married Mary, daughter of Colonel Robert Means, a native of Ireland,—an intelligent, high-minded, and successful merchant, and for many years a resident of Amherst, N.H. Mrs. Mason was a woman of rare gentleness, and sweetness of manner, spirit, and character; endowed



with the domestic virtues to a degree seldom equalled ; and with a simple, unostentatious piety, which gave grace to her speech, and beauty to her life ; as a wife, mother, and friend, loved, honored, regretted, as only those can be in whom the best gifts of nature and cultivation are consecrated by Christian faith and purpose.

Charles Mason, the youngest son of Jeremiah and Mary Mason, was born in Portsmouth, N.H., on the 25th of July, 1812. His early education was conducted under the choicest home-influences, both intellectual and moral. He inherited from his father a judicial cast of mind, habits of careful and accurate thought, and the tendency to form opinions on the deliberate weighing of argument and evidence ; while his mother's simplicity, modesty, and tenderness were happily blended in his boyhood with the attributes that gave presage of a genuine and self-sustaining manliness. He was fitted for college at the Portsmouth Academy, which at that period changed its preceptors annually or oftener ; so that, though young Mason won the strong attachment of all his teachers, no one of them could claim a predominant part in the formation of his character as a student. About the time when he would have entered college, he was seized with a dangerous illness, — the same disease that terminated his life after an interval of thirty-five years of almost uninterrupted health. His recovery was slow ; and for several months he was so feeble, that the care and comfort of his home were deemed essential to his entire restoration. He was accordingly intrusted to the writer of this sketch, then preceptor of the Academy, as a private pupil, to be prepared for advanced standing in Harvard University. His father's library was his study and his recitation-room. His conscientious diligence and fidelity, his maturity of judgment, his frankness, probity, and purity of character, are held in grateful remembrance, and gave full promise of all that he became in subsequent years. Seldom can there have been at so early an age so symmetrical a

development. The recent death of an elder brother, of distinguished ability and excellence, had impressed him deeply, and combined with the religious instructions of his childhood to form that profound yet cheerful seriousness which was hardly less the characteristic of his boyhood than of his riper years.

At the commencement of the summer term of 1829, he entered the freshman-class at Harvard. Here he assumed and maintained a high rank as a scholar, though with but little ambition for college-honors. His aim was to satisfy his own conscience by the faithful discharge of every duty, rather than to acquire a brilliant reputation. He brought to his classical studies a discriminating taste; and in these, as also in metaphysical and moral science, he manifested a peculiar aptitude and proficiency. His choice of the Hebrew language as an elective study indicated his future profession; and in this department he again, with several of the brightest and best among his classmates, came under the tuition of the writer. In this little class were destined ministers of several different denominations, — Unitarian, Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal, — their teacher at the same time a theological student; and the recitation-hour was often prolonged in friendly discussion of the great themes on which their views were so widely diverse, though with entire community and harmony of aim and spirit. In these conferences, Mason bore his part with the firmness of settled conviction, but with a meekness, gentleness, and modesty which commanded the respect of the whole circle for himself and for the church of which he was the sole representative among them. The college-course, though covering ostensibly nearly the same ground as at present (including, indeed, a larger *minimum* in the mathematical and classical departments), made a much less heavy draft upon the time and labor of a good scholar than it does now; and Mason availed himself of his leisure hours for the perusal of the best authors, particularly of those early English

classics which were his favorite reading through life, and which exercised a marked influence in the formation of his style. He was graduated with honor in 1832.

On leaving college, Mr. Mason spent a year, at his father's residence in Boston, in the study of the Greek and Latin classics and in theological reading. In the autumn of 1833, he entered the Andover Theological Seminary, where he remained a year. The two following years were spent at the General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in New York; and, at the close of this term, he was ordained deacon by the venerable Bishop Griswold. In September, 1836, he was invited to become the Rector of Christ Church, Cambridge; but declined the invitation, in order to secure an added period for professional study. On the 1st of May, 1837, he was instituted Rector of St. Peter's Church, Salem; and retained that charge for ten years, interrupted only by a European tour of a few months, at a time when health somewhat enfeebled and symptoms of ophthalmic disease rendered an interval of relaxation necessary. His ministry in Salem was eminently successful, both as regarded the external growth and the spiritual prosperity of his church. Assiduous in his own field of labor; prompt, judicious, and persevering in all the offices of a Christian citizen; active in the administration of all local charities; courteous and kind in his intercourse with the ministers and members of other communions,—he left not only a cherished place in the hearts of his parishioners, but a hardly less fond regard and enduring memory in the whole community.

Domestic reasons, and especially the desire to minister to his father's relief and comfort in the growing infirmity of his advanced age, were among his strong inducements to resign a charge, which was relinquished only with mutual regret, and under a controlling sense of higher duty. In 1847, he became Rector of Grace Church, Boston; and the residue of his life was consecrated, with single-hearted zeal and

diligence, to the duties of that office, and to the various and numerous departments of charity and philanthropy which demand the advocacy and effort of a Christian minister worthy of the name. His labors as a minister, until his last sickness, were suspended only for a second and more prolonged European tour, on which he was accompanied by a part of his family.

Mr. Mason's domestic life, except for the shadow of one great grief, was singularly happy. On the 11th of June, 1837, he married Susanna, daughter of the late Amos Lawrence, with whose family he was already intimately connected; his mother's sister having become the second wife of Mr. Lawrence. Mrs. Mason closely resembled her father in the traits of character which rendered him—unostentatious as he was—one of the truly illustrious men of his time. She made her home happy, and a centre of hospitality and benignant influence. With a rare grace, beauty, and attractiveness of mien and manner, she united qualities that won the enduring respect and affection of all whose privilege it was to know her. She died, deeply lamented, on the 2d of December, 1844, leaving three daughters and one son. On the 9th of August, 1849, Mr. Mason was married to Anna Huntington Lyman, daughter of the late Hon. Jonathan H. Lyman of Northampton, a distinguished lawyer, and a man of eminent ability and worth, who had been cut off midway on a successful and honored career of professional and public life. In this new connection, he was again richly blessed. Thenceforward, few can have enjoyed so much as he in all domestic and social aspects and relations.

Late in the winter of 1862, Dr. Mason made a brief and rapid journey to Washington; and returned, as he supposed, suffering under unusual and extreme weariness. He, however, seemed to recover from his fatigue; and, after a few days, resumed his duties, apparently in perfect health. But, whether in consequence of an undue strain upon his vital

energies, or of some morbid infection contracted during his absence, or, it may be, without any predisposing cause that could be traced, symptoms of alarming disease were soon developed, and typhoid-fever set in. While his consciousness remained unimpaired, he manifested, under great depression and pain, the serenity, self-forgetfulness, and kind consideration for those around him, which had characterized him through life. He knew that he was very ill: but, before he had been made aware of the extremity of his danger, — indeed, while his physicians and friends still cherished some hope of his restoration, — he passed into a comatose state; and thence sank into painless dissolution, on the morning of Sunday, March 23, 1862. Funeral services were held at Grace Church on the following Wednesday, and were attended by a large and deeply sympathizing congregation, filling and exceeding the utmost capacity of the edifice. More than fifty clergymen of his own church were present, together with a large number of his professional brethren of other denominations. The services were conducted by Right Reverend Bishop Eastburn, assisted by Rev. Messrs. Babcock and Spear; and the bishop delivered an address commemorative of Dr. Mason's character and services.

We have thus glanced briefly at the leading dates and events in the life of our departed associate and friend. There remains the more interesting, delicate, and difficult task of presenting him on our record, in mind and heart, as we have known him.

His mental action was distinguished by precision, justness, and accuracy. Neither emotion, prejudice, nor enthusiasm, suppressed or distorted the judicial faculty. His strong yet thoroughly disciplined feelings received law from his intellect, instead of sweeping it into their channel; and they were both profound and quiet, because they flowed from well-grounded belief and thorough conviction; while unreasoning emotion may roll in a torrent to-day, and be dry

to-morrow. His mental processes, for a similar reason, were slow. But the work, once done, was well done. The ground, once taken, was permanently occupied. His mind thus had a continuous growth and a symmetrical development; and, to those who saw him only at somewhat distant intervals, he seemed more and richer at every interview. He had more taste than fancy. With a strongly marked individuality, he indulged in no eccentricities of speculation or utterance. A severely discriminating judgment, conformed to the highest standards, repressed all wayward tendencies of thought, and made his opinions always worthy of respect and deference.

His learning was at once extensive and thorough. A merited testimony to his reputation as a divine was paid to him by his Alma Mater in the degree of Doctor of Divinity, conferred on him in 1858,—a degree which he received in the same year from Trinity College, Hartford. He was especially conversant with the writings of the Christian fathers and of the early theologians of the English Church. In literature, he was most familiar with the best authors, particularly with the ancient classics and with the English writers of the Elizabethan age. He was greatly interested in legal subjects; and, particularly in the latter part of his life, had instituted special studies in that department, with reference to an important ecclesiastical suit then and still pending. In historical pursuits, we found him a prompt and cordial helper in the deliberations of this Society, from whose meetings he was seldom absent, and whose aims had his warm and constant sympathy and furtherance.

His style as a writer was severely chaste and accurate; seldom impassioned, never dull; rhythmical, pointed; elaborate without being involved; adapted, perhaps, to the eye rather than to the ear. His aim seemed to be the statement rather than the enforcement of the truth. He appealed to the judgment rather than to feeling or imagination. He was free from all rhetorical artifices; and his published writings

would command approval in proportion to the rigidity of the critical canons to which they were subjected. Indeed, his method of composition was conformed rather to the more exacting standards of an earlier generation than to a time like the present, when sensational writing, preaching, and oratory can override with impunity all the barriers of taste, and even of reverence and decency. We know not, but we think, that Tillotson may have been, in his estimation, a model preacher; for there is much in those of his discourses that we have read which reminds us of the simple, unexaggerated presentation of doctrine and duty in those of the archbishop.

In conversation, manners, and social intercourse, Dr. Mason filled out our idea of that most perfect style of man,—the Christian gentleman. Dignity and modesty were so evenly balanced, that we could not say which preponderated. The most delicate courtesy governed him in all the relations of life. His was the politeness, based on the golden rule of the gospel, which cannot say or do that to another which it would not have said or done in return. He could be severe against falsehood, wrong, or evil; but no provocation could betray him into personal invective or abuse, or make him otherwise than kind even to those from whom he dissented the most widely, or whom he held in the lowest esteem.

Thoroughly a Churchman in conviction, taste, and sympathy, he was still more profoundly a Christian; and, while he never swerved from loyalty to his own church, he was as free from exclusiveness and from limiting prejudices as the broadest latitudinarian ever professes to be. His relations with clergymen and Christians of other communions were cordial and intimate; and, in both the fields of his ministerial labor, he was held in as high esteem and as warm affection by the members of other churches as by those of his own. And, to all who knew him, he seemed a single-

hearted, close, and earnest follower of his Saviour,—loving all who loved the Lord; living only to do the Lord's work; and diligent as he was in every form of Christian activity, yet performing a still larger and nobler service by an example and influence which made piety beautiful, lovely, and attractive.

His labors in Boston far exceeded the limits of his parochial charge. At an early period of his residence in this city, he associated himself with Rev. Dr. Peabody of King's Chapel, and Rev. Frederic T. Gray, in measures for the amelioration of the condition of the friendless poor; and was one of the principal founders of the association for that purpose, which is still among the most actively beneficent institutions in our community. When this agency was efficiently organized, he turned his attention to the neglected children of the city. For some years, he connected missionary operations in their behalf with the charities of his own parish; enlisting the co-operation of benevolent persons among his parishioners. In 1853, he hired rooms for the reception of these suffering children, and employed a female missionary to aid him in his endeavors to minister to their physical comfort and their moral and spiritual well-being. In 1855, his efforts had been so successful, and had become so extensively known, that the larger public were prepared to second him in providing a permanent asylum for the objects of his charity; and the "Church Home for Orphan and Destitute Children" was established. It is impossible to estimate the extended and enduring good resulting to its beneficiaries and to the whole community from an institution of this class, in which children, who would otherwise grow up in ignorance and vice, are made the objects of a parental kindness, placed under the highest religious influence, and prepared for useful and respectable positions in life. This alone would be an adequate monument of Dr. Mason's unwearying toil in his chosen field of beneficent effort. But

these special services, by introducing him to the poor as their devoted friend, rendered him emphatically their minister. At all seasons, and in every way in which he could promote their good, he made himself accessible to their calls, familiar with their homes, and conversant with their needs. He forgot not that the preaching of the gospel to the poor was among the foremost of the prophetic designations of the Christian era; and no minister of Christ can ever have laid more solemn and intense emphasis than he did on this essential portion of his sacred calling. Nowhere, except in the hearts of his own household, can he have left so long and dear a remembrance as in the obscure, needy, and suffering homes in which he so lovingly ministered, and in which he so often saved the stricken from despair, and rescued the tempted from ruin.

We need not say that such a life was a happy life. None enjoyed more than he, or contributed more generously to the joy of others. He had a sunny temper, was accessible to all the brighter scenes and aspects of nature and of life, and had the warmest sympathy with childhood and mirth, with every thing glad and beautiful, with all that is genial in art and taste and the refinements of social culture. The fountain of youth, drawn from, it might seem, too sparingly in his grave and thoughtful boyhood, remained unwasted, full, and clear to the very last week of his life: he became young again with his children; and in the ripe maturity of years, and under the weight of thronging cares and duties, he manifested even more buoyancy of spirit than before the responsibilities of life rested heavily upon him.

Dr. Mason's first publication was a sermon, preached at Salem in 1843, upon the death of Bishop Griswold, who had been at a previous period Rector of St. Peter's Church.

In June, 1844, he preached at the Theological Seminary in New York a sermon entitled "The Divinity of Christ not Contradictory to Human Reason," which has been several

times reprinted, and which deserves emphatic praise as a specimen of the treatment of a controverted dogma with earnestness and warmth, yet with no admixture of asperity or bitterness.

In 1847, he preached the Annual Sermon before the Associate Alumni of the Theological Seminary, on "The True Power of the Christian Ministry;" which was published by the request of the Alumni.

In 1852, he preached at Grace Church, and published, a sermon on the death of Daniel Webster.

In 1853, he was invited by a committee in Philadelphia to deliver one of a series of twelve lectures on the Evidences of Christianity. From the list of subjects proposed, he chose the argument from miracles. The entire series was published; and, while all are worthy of the cause and the occasion, his lecture is second to no one of the twelve in close and cogent reasoning.

His last publication was a sermon preached in Grace Church on Jan. 4, 1861,—the day of the National Fast appointed by President Buchanan; a discourse marked equally by fervent patriotism, and by a keen and discriminating sense of the moral causes of the fearful public calamities then gathering over the whole people.

In addition to these discourses, he published various articles in religious and other periodicals, of which no list has been preserved, and which often appeared without the author's name. He had commenced the collection and arrangement of materials for a memoir of his father; which, we trust, will yet be completed by some adequate biographer.